

ENGLISH LITERATURE
VOYAGE INTO THE EVERLASTING



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When I received this task to write an essay about my journey and efforts to get accepted into UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, somehow instead of the academic blood bath I went through, what came to my mind first was the inner turmoils that wrecked my brain. No doubt I went to hell and back in academic matters, but that was only the surface of the ocean. Thousands of feet underneath is where the monsters lurk, a place darker than the void you visit when you close your eyes. Here you may sail down deep into the ocean and submerge into the brief, yet dramatized voyage this ghostly sailor leads.

As a former 'typical narrow-minded science student' back in high school, there were quite a handful of dilemmas I harboured in the back of my mind. Those thoughts kept on suffocating me like a godforsaken miasma, and they left me wavering pitifully. Questions, such as 'Is this the right path to take?' and 'Am I going to waste my potential?'--*which pulls the corners of my lips when I think about it now*--used to be the very reason behind my crisis. I was uncertain of what I truly wanted and it disturbed me greatly. These influencing questions live on even until after I found my answers and chose the path I decided to take, It was an endless cycle of cat and mouse game between me and my inner consciousness. I ended up seeking comfort from the ache that came from my double-edged sword of a hellish routine I called *studying*. The Mandiri test required social subjects that I had never studied before, hence why I acted like a mania during the days before the test. The dinner table at home would be littered with scattered pens, tattered books, and cups of caffeinated drinks--*that later on would leave drops of stains on the papers*--until late at night. My sleeping schedule was a mess beyond saving, and at times I caught the blood vessels under my skin swimming around in circles. Sometimes, when I looked into the mirror, the tip of my fingers would reflectively swipe under my eyes because the darkening skin seemed too surreal to be true. Adding more to my list of madness, my body would suddenly shake and my eyes widened in panic. At first, I thought

there was an earthquake, but as time went by and it became a recurring thing, I'd purse my lips and count to ten because it was just my heart beating *oh* so loudly. Since then, I began to long for a renaissance; a rebirth to erase the curse I've foolishly cast upon myself.

One day, I opened my eyes only to find that I had adjusted to the darkness. And instead of the stinging pain that I usually felt in a particular nook of my brain and my chest, what was left was a dull numbness. I've reached a 'break-even point', and I felt neither happiness nor sadness. My mind went auto-pilot to seize that moment and escape that dark cave that reeked of negativity. 'Is this the right path to take? Am I going to waste my potential?' These questions still float around within this accursed brain of mine. They were of a raging hurricane; brutal and untameable. But then the unmerciful hurricane died down and came to me a sliver of hope and realisation, like an uninvited scratch of paper that slipped into a small gap in my opened window. Like a clarity; a cobblestone wall of a prison that had finally crumbled. That day, it revealed to me crystal clear that *no matter which path I took or what potential I might 'waste', there is no time to grieve and mourn too much over spilt milk*. One path may contain joy and hardships, and so are the others. The least I can do is inhale and remember every scent I come across on this path.

Now that I've made a truce with my inner consciousness, I can see things more clearly. Flashes of who I could be in the future, who will stand beside me, and everything the world has much to over ignite the dying flame that hid under my burnt-out soul. They remind me of what I wanted to become and what I wanted to achieve. I said that in the past tense, but here I shall make them present tense once more. I will do my best to use what I have to its full potential. In the next five years, I would like to offer my guidance and a treasure of knowledge to share with the younger generations. I want to be a kind and successful woman who won't hesitate to consider helping others.

My resolve might not be as firm as a fantastical GOATed protagonist pirate's magical anchor, but it can certainly handle a few of the ocean's wrathful tidal waves. And in further time, it may even conquer the ocean